

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1238, Jeffery Paul Hopkins, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Michael F. Bennet, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Mazie Hirono, Chris Van Hollen, Jacky Rosen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Sherrod Brown, Amy Klobuchar, Tina Smith, Debbie Stabenow, Elizabeth Warren, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tammy Duckworth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jeffery Paul Hopkins, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 60, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 382 Ex.]

YEAS—60

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Romney
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rosen
Booker	Kelly	Rounds
Brown	Kennedy	Sanders
Burr	King	Sasse
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cornyn	Merkley	Tillis
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Toomey
Durbin	Murphy	Van Hollen
Feinstein	Murray	Warnock
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Warren
Graham	Padilla	Whitehouse
Grassley	Peters	Wicker
Hassan	Portman	Wyden

NAYS—34

Barrasso	Cramer	Hoeven
Blackburn	Crapo	Hyde-Smith
Blunt	Daines	Inhofe
Boozman	Ernst	Johnson
Braun	Fischer	Lankford
Capito	Hagerty	Lee
Cassidy	Hawley	Lummis

Marshall	Rubio	Thune
McConnell	Scott (FL)	Tuberville
Moran	Scott (SC)	Young
Paul	Shelby	
Risch	Sullivan	

NOT VOTING—6

Cotton	Duckworth	Schatz
Cruz	Hickenlooper	Warner

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. On this vote, the yeas are 60, the nays are 34.

The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF JERRY W. BLACKWELL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Jerry Blackwell to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota.

Mr. Blackwell will bring outstanding qualifications and deep experience to the Federal bench. He received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before entering private practice and, eventually, establishing his own law firm. Mr. Blackwell has specialized in commercial litigation, including mass torts, and he has represented Fortune 100 and Fortune 500 companies in a variety of matters.

But in addition to his success in the private sector, Mr. Blackwell has also answered the call to serve. In 2021, he served as a special prosecutor in the trial of Derek Chauvin, who was convicted for the horrific murder of George Floyd. Mr. Blackwell has also committed himself to increasing diversity in the legal profession by serving as a founding member of the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers and the Minnesota Equity and Justice Project.

Given his broad, extensive experience, it is no surprise that the American Bar Association unanimously rated Mr. Blackwell “well qualified” to serve on the district court. He also enjoys the strong support of his home State Senators, Ms. KLOBUCHAR and Ms. SMITH. I am proud to support Mr. Blackwell’s nomination, and I strongly urge my colleagues to do the same.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the Blackwell nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jerry W. Blackwell, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

VOTE ON BLACKWELL NOMINATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Blackwell nomination?

Mr. KELLY. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 383 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Baldwin	Grassley	Ossoff
Bennet	Hassan	Padilla
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Peters
Blunt	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Rosen
Brown	Kelly	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Lujan	Smith
Collins	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Durbin	Merkley	Warnock
Feinstein	Murkowski	Warren
Gillibrand	Murphy	Whitehouse
Graham	Murray	Wyden

NAYS—43

Barrasso	Hoeven	Rounds
Blackburn	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Boozman	Inhofe	Sasse
Braun	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Burr	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Capito	Lankford	Shelby
Cassidy	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lummis	Thune
Cramer	Marshall	Tillis
Crapo	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Tuberville
Ernst	Paul	Wicker
Fischer	Portman	Young
Hagerty	Risch	
Hawley	Romney	

NOT VOTING—6

Cotton	Duckworth	Schatz
Cruz	Hickenlooper	Warner

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The Senator from Ohio.

UKRAINE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I come to the floor for the 27th consecutive week since the invasion of Ukraine to give another update to the American people on the brutal, illegal, and totally unprovoked attack by Russia on its neighbor Ukraine. This is at a time when brave Ukrainian freedom fighters continue to successfully fend off the third largest army in the world.

What Russia thought was going to be a weeklong invasion, successfully occupying Ukraine, is now past the 9-month mark. Against all odds, Ukraine has not only survived, but they have pushed back a much larger Russian army—more than half of the land that Russia occupied in Ukraine. Remember, they were all up here in the area of Kyiv and all down here. More than half of the land has been liberated already.

Here in the northeast part of Ukraine, near Kharkiv, in this province, the Kharkiv Oblast, the Ukrainian forces continue to make progress pushing back against the Russian forces.

It has been slow—a combination of things. One is, it is mud season. It is very difficult for them to get through the mud with their armored vehicles. The second is, the Russian forces who were pushed back from here in September have now dug in along this line. So it is slower going, but they continue to fight.

They are continuing with the momentum that started when they took over Kharkiv.

Further south, near Bakhmut—and Bakhmut is in this area, and I was actually in Bakhmut back in 2018 at the so-called line of contact—there is very intense fighting going on. This is where you have had months and months of fierce combat, lots of artillery. It has turned this area, the Bakhmut area where I was, into a battlefield reminiscent of what you might have seen during World War II—just total destruction, as you can see from this photograph.

This is the Bakhmut area today. There you have the Russian forces, mostly the Wagner Group, which is a mercenary group, making steady but very slow progress. Ukraine has made them pay dearly for every meter, but that is, again, kind of in that central part of eastern Ukraine.

In the south of Ukraine, near Kherson, they have also made good progress. You can see here in the blue where the Ukrainian forces, in the fall, earlier this fall, were able to liberate parts of occupied Ukraine.

This is an interesting area. I think it is relatively quiet right now. We had a briefing today about that. But I don't think it is going to stay quiet for long. This is an area to watch. There are already reports of Ukrainian raids, actually, on a small peninsula there.

This is a little closer look at this. Ukrainian raids have now been made on this peninsula which goes out into the Black Sea. Also, we know that Ukrainian forces have crossed the river here, the Dnipro River, and planted Ukrainian flags on the other side of the river, letting the Russians know they are not safe in this region; this is Ukraine.

They have also started to evacuate, facilitate the evacuation of some of the Ukrainian civilians from this side, the occupied side of the river.

All this indicates to me that the Ukrainians are continuing to send a clear signal to the Russians that they are not done in terms of liberating this part of Ukraine this winter.

Unfortunately, while the nation of Ukraine has survived this war, so far not all Ukrainians have. These gains on the battlefield I have talked about have come at a tremendous cost. Casualty reports have been hard to come by, but we know that tens of thousands

of Ukrainian soldiers have been killed during this liberation.

But it is not just the men and women in uniform that are taking the brunt of Vladimir Putin's aggression. Since the first day of this war, it is innocent Ukrainians themselves who have been dying. They have been intentionally targeted by Russian forces.

How many cities and villages have now become infamous for the war crimes committed by Russia? Bucha and Irpin, cities where I was visiting several weeks ago; Mariupol, Izium. Think of 4-year-old Liza. We had her photograph up here on the floor. She was killed in Vinnytsia in July. Think of 2-day-old Serhii, who was killed 2 weeks ago—2 days old, a newborn—at a maternity hospital in Vilniysk.

The United Nations reports that at least 6,500 civilians have been killed in this senseless Russian war, then adds that “the actual figures are considerably higher.” We just don't know what they are. This is because we know so little about the horrors which are occurring behind enemy lines.

So when you think about it, although we know more about the casualties that have occurred in the interior of Ukraine, what we don't know is how many casualties and war crimes and deaths are occurring in this Russian-occupied area, the red area.

What we do know is that so many of the atrocities in this war are only brought to light months after they occur. They happen in silence, and then they are discovered when these territories are liberated by Ukrainian forces. That is the bittersweet pattern of this war: You have the Russians occupying a territory, committing heinous war crimes, atrocities. Then the area is liberated, and we discover these horrific crimes.

And Russia's crimes are not just limited to the territory it occupies. Russian forces are losing on the battlefield, as we talked about, not making the progress they want, and they are sort of taking their frustration out on the rest of Ukraine. This is with cruise missiles and drones, bombing all of these other parts of Ukraine.

They continue to strike noncombatants. A whole new wave of attacks occurred yesterday, as an example, mostly on Ukrainian infrastructure, energy infrastructure, but also on just civilian targets. They have destroyed neighborhoods, schools, hospitals. As this photo shows, they have really targeted civilian infrastructure. This is, again, some of the energy infrastructure that they have targeted.

When I was in Kyiv with Senator COONS about 3 weeks ago—we were there several days after one of the powerplants had been attacked—actually, the national utility—and these were targeted attacks on the infrastructure. But also Ukrainians, civilians, and workers were killed. It is not just collateral damage. These are targeted attacks on civilians—targeted and cruel.

Russia's goal, of course, is to try to force a whole new wave of civilians to

flee from their homes and head west. This massive displacement, of course, would further devastate Ukraine's economy, which is already expected to contract about 35 percent this year. We have seen this time and time again since the war has started. They can't defeat Ukraine on the battlefield, so they strike behind the battlefield to try to destroy Ukraine as a whole.

The actions by the Kremlin to destroy these civilian areas and kill innocent Ukrainians are also, of course, meant to dampen the Ukrainian resolve. But what I have seen on my trips to Ukraine and my trips to the region is that every time there is a Russian atrocity, the resolve of the Ukrainian people doesn't weaken; it gets stronger—and for good reason.

And the Ukrainian military certainly isn't backing down in their fierce defense of their homeland. In fact, a Ukrainian military spokesman recently said that Ukraine intends to continue, if not accelerate, its counter-offensive this winter in these areas we talked about—in particular here and here. So stay tuned because I think the Ukrainians are not done yet this winter in many places along the frontline, although the winter is bitterly cold for the infantry. The ground is also frozen solid, which makes mechanized warfare possible again.

Additionally, on Monday and again today, there were explosions reported at military bases in Russia. These are military bases hundreds of miles behind the frontlines. So this is in Russian territory. There are military bases that are experiencing explosions. These bases happen to house the Tu-95 bombers, which have regularly taken part in Russia's deadly cruise missile strikes against Ukrainian civilians.

According to the British Ministry of Defense, these explosions constitute, as they say, “some of the most strategically significant failures of Russian force protection since [Russia's] invasion of Ukraine.”

Ukraine is the shield defending freedom in the West. When I visited Ukraine in August and November, I heard from so many Ukrainians who see themselves that way. They are holding Russia at bay, essentially, for the rest of the world. For years—think about it—Russia has threatened Europe and other regions with military action. We have all witnessed their attack of the country of Georgia and their brutal tactics in Syria and Chechnya.

In 2014, and then, of course, in February of this year, Ukraine became Russia's next target; and if Ukraine falls, Russia has promised other dominos will fall in Eastern and Central Europe. They have said openly they want to recreate the Soviet Union or the Russian Empire, which would include so many countries in the region.

The brave soldiers of Ukraine, men and women in uniform, are holding back the forces of Russian tyranny, and we should honor their sacrifice and

their bravery. Fortunately, they are not in this fight alone. Over 50 countries from around the world have stepped up to help Ukraine defend itself.

Ukraine's freedom fighters have been trained and equipped not just by the United States but by dozens of other countries that believe in freedom. Ukrainians are well aware of this, and they are eternally grateful. I hear this gratitude every time I am with Ukrainians. Yesterday, I met with a bunch of Ukrainian Parliamentarians from their Rada here in Washington. But when I have been in Ukraine, I have heard it also.

When I spoke with President Zelenskyy in Kyiv in August and again in November, the first thing he said to me was, "Thank you to the American people."

The aid from the United States and our allies does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Ukrainian soldiers are bearing the brunt of Russia's wrath, but because of the significant assistance provided by the West, President Zelenskyy speaks about this war against Russian aggression as a joint battle and that we should continue to strive together toward our joint victory.

Ukrainians are well aware of the need to provide transparency to taxpayers here in the United States as to how this aid is being used. I think that is very important. During both my visits to Kyiv this year, I spoke with our diplomats at the U.S. Embassy about how they are ensuring proper oversight and accountability for military aid.

I have also met twice with the 101st Airborne in Poland, the principal unit responsible for delivery of U.S. and allied military assistance. They have gone into great detail about how they are tracking and monitoring the U.S. military assistance through so-called end-use monitoring to ensure the military equipment actually ends up in the right hands.

One thing interesting to me, confirmed again today, is that we have sent these HIMARS, which are these rocket-launching systems, to Ukraine that have been particularly effective and that, at least at this point—we have sent about 20 of them—not a single one, not a single one has been attacked and destroyed or has gotten into the wrong hands.

We also believe, from what we know, unbelievably, that with all the weapons we are sending to Ukraine, we don't have any instances that are documented of these weapons getting into the wrong hands. Plenty of Russian weapons have gotten into Ukrainians' hands—I will tell you that—including lots of armored vehicles that they have left behind.

So no one is advocating that this Congress or U.S. taxpayers give Ukraine a blank check. This aid is generously provided by taxpayers so it has got to be accountable to taxpayers. Ukraine knows that and, again, has

gone to great lengths to provide transparency, even in this time of war.

These resources fund not only Ukraine's military; they back the government and help maintain and repair civilian infrastructure. Ukraine's economy has been hit so hard by this conflict that, without help from its allies, the government there would be unable to provide many basic services to its citizens.

The Europeans, Japanese, and others, of course, have stepped up here, as they should. This is particularly important this winter. As Russia attacks Ukraine's energy infrastructure to plunge the country into cold darkness, the humanitarian aid from the United States and dozens of other countries has ensured that innocent men, women, and children are able to survive the cold Ukrainian winter amidst these heinous Russian war crimes.

Our economic aid, along with that of the European Union and dozens of other countries, has supported Ukraine's Government so that critical services to its citizens can continue. With regard to the economic assistance, by the way, the Ukraine budget support goes through the World Bank from the United States because, in addition to our own oversight, the bank adds a second layer of oversight and accountability, including issuing periodic reports and audits to both parties.

Economic assistance is further monitored by a USAID contractor, the U.S. accounting firm Deloitte. They monitor all expenses, which is a good thing, in my view.

We also need to ensure our constituents that what we are providing to Ukraine is actually working; it is making a difference. And it certainly is. When Ukraine took back the city of Kherson here, which was the first and only provincial capital taken by Russia, the key element to their success, I am told, was the military equipment provided by the United States—and others, but primarily the United States—and that was the HIMARS launchers we talked about a moment ago. These missile launchers were very effective at tearing down the Russian infrastructure that was providing the supplies to Russia—so the weapons, the food, and so on. By wearing down the Russian forces and forcing them to abandon the city, the American weapons were very effective in debilitating Russia's ability to command and resupply its forces.

And the air defense systems provided by the United States and our allies have helped Ukraine shoot down hundreds of missiles and drones launched by Russia that otherwise would have killed innocent civilians.

I do continue to believe that we can and should do more, by the way, particularly with regard to military assistance. I continue to urge the Biden administration to provide Ukraine with more of the weapons that the Ukrainians themselves have said they actually want and need and can use.

This would include fourth-generation advanced fighter jets—not the latest and greatest but things like F-16s that we are not using that they could use, that other countries have that we could allow them to provide to Ukraine; Abrams tanks that other countries have that they are willing to provide; long-range missiles.

If we are serious about helping Ukraine continue to win, as opposed to the possibility that this could just result in a stalemate, we should provide these weapons so that they can respond to the very real Russian threat.

Let me pose this question to my colleagues who are skeptical about assistance: If we had not led our allies in supporting Ukraine during this fight for survival, what would have happened? What would have happened if we allowed this authoritarian regime to dominate and subjugate its neighbors by force of arms?

Ukraine would have become an occupied state. Many more refugees, by the millions, would have fled to Europe, to the United States, and elsewhere. And even if the threat by Vladimir Putin to occupy all these other independent countries in the neighborhood that were once part of the Soviet Union had not yet become a reality, the United States would have mobilized thousands of troops and massive amounts of weapons at the borders of these NATO allies at a tremendous cost to the American taxpayer.

I think we have to think about that, think about what the alternative would have been. It also would have resulted, of course, in the rules-based international order that we have had in place for almost 80 years, since World War II, crumbling in Ukraine. What would have happened then? What message would aggressive adversaries like China and Iran take from that?

The world would have become a much more dangerous and volatile place, let's be honest. Countries would have armed up. This is why it is so important that we continue to support Ukraine. Our enemies and our adversaries alike are watching very carefully. We can't pull back now, not during this critical time. We cannot falter.

In addition to working with our allies to help Ukraine win on the battlefield, we have got to continue to tighten the global sanctions and export controls on Russia. I believe it is only that combination—success on the battlefield and making the Russian economy feel the pain—that is going to be successful in getting Russia to the peace table. Export controls already are blocking supplies, including semiconductors, needed to create military equipment in Russia. So that is having an effect. Sanctions must include better success at stopping the energy receipts to Russia that are fueling the war machine.

I mentioned what is happening to the Ukrainian economy. The Russian economy has also gone down but not nearly as much as the Ukrainian economy.

Why? Largely because the economy depends on the energy receipts that are still coming in from Russia selling its oil and gas around the world.

This week, there was some progress on that front. Back in June, the European Union decided to end all seaborne Russian oil imports by December 5. That was Monday. And the EU did, indeed, follow through on this promise. I applaud the European Union for taking that step.

However, in June, the EU also committed to end financing and insurance services for all vessels carrying Russian oil, even to non-European countries. This would be devastating to Russian oil exports since Europe dominates a large chunk of the maritime services market. Financing and insurance: Without financing and insurance from Europe, these ships would never embark and Russian oil sales would plummet.

Unfortunately, in this case, the EU did not follow through on this promise made in June. Instead, on Friday, the EU, the United States, other G-7 countries, and Australia agreed to what is being called a “price cap” scheme. Under this framework, the participating countries will continue to provide financing insurance for vessels selling Russian oil but only below a certain cost per barrel. So instead of ending these sales of seaborne Russian oil exports, we are enabling them at a lower price. What is more, as the Washington Post reports, the price cap, which was agreed to at \$60 per barrel, “is well above Russia’s cost of production and close to where its oil is currently trading—meaning it may not have much of a direct impact.”

That is my concern about it. I understand that there is another argument that the Russian oil price would, perhaps, be even higher at lower volumes if they didn’t have these ships. But I think the first plan made in June would have been much more effective in helping to tighten these sanctions.

Analysts, by the way, said the cap will have little immediate impact on the oil revenues that Moscow is currently earning. In fact, Russia itself said on Monday the cap is not going to hurt the financing of its special military operation, as they call it, in Ukraine—this deadly and unprovoked war.

The price cap is “an unhappy compromise that will do very little to cut Russia’s oil revenue” from current levels, said Ben Cahill, an energy security expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

I would ask the suffering people of Ukraine what they would think about it. Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic States—who have consistently been right about the threat of Russian aggression—suggested a price cap of just \$30 a barrel if they were going to do a price cap; so half of the \$60 that the EU, the G-7, the U.S., and Australia ended up at. The one we agreed to, again, was twice as high.

On a more positive note, at a meeting in Romania last week, the NATO’s Secretary General reaffirmed that the door to membership remains open to Ukraine. This has been NATO’s official policy for Ukraine, by the way, since 2008, but it was important that the alliance reaffirm that commitment last week in the context of Vladimir Putin’s war on Ukraine.

I encourage NATO to begin the steps to welcome Ukraine in the future. Despite all the atrocities and hardships now we have talked about tonight, I believe that Ukraine will eventually prevail in this conflict and survive as a country and that Ukraine will someday join NATO and the European Union to add the most important security guarantees they could get. No amount of Russian missiles can stop that, by the way, because the people of Ukraine will always have something that Russia does not: freedom and faith.

Faith is what our Founding Fathers had so many years ago when they set out on a risky journey to chart America’s own destiny—faith that freedom would work. Faith is what the Ukrainian people grasped onto as they embarked on their own Revolution of Dignity in 2014, abandoning a corrupt Russian-backed regime and choosing freedom, democracy, and free markets. Ukrainians chose to stand with us, with the European Union and the United States and other free nations.

Faith is what gave the people of Ukraine the strength and resolve at the beginning of Russia’s overwhelming invasion in February—faith that as a country, they would survive, and as a people, they would come out on the other end of this conflict—when the odds were so stacked against them—more unified than ever.

Against all odds, again, that faith has been justified time and time again during this bloody war. Now, once again, it is time for us to join our allies in keeping the faith—faith in the proven Ukrainian bravery and perseverance and faith that freedom will win out over tyranny if we stay the course.

I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Republican Leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1103, Jay Curtis Shambaugh, of Maryland, to be an Under Secretary of the Treasury; that there be 10 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form on the nomination; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the

table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO KEN LEONARD

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, anyone who knows Coach Ken Leonard knows that he cares deeply about football, but more than that, he cares deeply about people. As Illinois’ most successful high school football coach, Coach Leonard has left his mark on our State by leading Sacred Heart-Griffin High School to six State football championships and harnessing the power of sports to build confidence in young athletes. He never let any challenges get in his way and always inspired others to follow his lead.

Ken Leonard was born July 7, 1953, in Lexington, IL, to John and Iona Leonard. He was one of six children in his family, along with his two brothers and three sisters. He graduated from Chenoa High School in Chenoa, IL, where he was a four-sport athlete. Following high school, Ken was a 2-year starter for the Hawks of Harper Junior College football team in Palatine, IL, and a 1-year starter for the Trojans of Dakota State University in Madison, SD. Ken then graduated college from Illinois State University, but his career as a player was just the beginning of his legendary legacy.

In 1980, Ken took his first football head coaching job at Gridley High School, in a community of fewer than 2,000 people. A former smalltown kid himself, Ken felt right at home at Gridley, but the school struggled to recruit enough student players to field a football team. And they were forced to shut the program down. This setback, however, did not stop Ken from pursuing his passion for football.

Later that spring, Ken received a call from Sacred Heart-Griffin High School, where he would go on to become the winningest high school football coach in Illinois history.

After 39 seasons with Sacred Heart-Griffin and 43 total seasons coaching high school football, Coach Leonard is set to retire this December. By the time he leaves the locker room for the last time, he will have coached 500 games and taught countless young athletes how to work as a team.

As a parent of Sacred Heart-Griffin alumni and a fan of high school football, I feel lucky to have met Coach